



The Benefits of Starting and Working with a Neighborhood Networks Center

Villa D'Ames Apartments in Marrero, LA is a HUD Section 8 property where the average household income is about \$6,034. Drugs, unemployment, lack of transportation, lack of education and hopelessness once prevailed.

Property owner and manager Christopher Homes, part of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, opened the Villa D'Ames Learning Center, a Neighborhood Networks center, in 1996. This strategic move contributed to:

- Increased rent payments, attributed to residents securing higher-paying jobs
- A lower vacancy rate
- Lowered maintenance and repair costs related to vandalism and negligence
- A prevailing positive sense of "community" among residents

Who benefits from Neighborhood Networks centers, and how?

Residents

Neighborhood Networks centers help residents gain self-sufficiency by becoming computer literate, preparing for good jobs, and improving their education and skills.

Centers typically offer programs and activities in:

- Technology training and access
- Education
- Employment
- Health
- Microenterprise development
- Child care
- Transportation
- Social services

Property owners and managers

Property owners and managers benefit, too. Simply put, a Neighborhood Networks center can improve your property's bottom line. HUD may allow you to use certain eligible property funds to help with start-up and operation costs. Starting a center could:

- Make your property more competitive,

attracting new residents, lowering vacancy rates and stabilizing the tenancy

- Decrease security and upkeep costs by giving residents a greater sense of pride in your property and a greater stake in the overall wellbeing of the community
- Help you to build lasting, mutually beneficial relationships with your residents and the local partners that work with the center

Neighborhood Networks Facts...

WHAT: Neighborhood Networks is a community-based initiative launched by HUD in September 1995. It encourages the development of resource and computer centers in HUD housing.

- More than 620 centers in operation*
- Thousands of business, community and government partners
- More than 744 properties with centers in planning*

WHO: Serves HUD housing residents, owners, managers, partners and communities.

*as of 08/00

Visit our website at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org

Partners

Partners and centers build relationships that meets specific needs and interests for both. Local partners are typically businesses, corporations, schools, colleges, hospitals, social service agencies, nonprofit organizations or government agencies. Partnering with a Neighborhood Networks center may help your organization to:

- Gain access to an untapped workforce that you can train to meet your needs
- Provide internship and volunteer opportunities for your organization
- Open a new "link" to new markets in the community
- Build your image as positive force in the community and make a real difference in its economic health and wealth

How a successful partnership might work:

- A social service agency provides support services at a Neighborhood Networks center, and reaches a new group of constituents.
- A corporation works with a center to develop and offer a job training program, and gains access to a newly trained workforce.
- Area colleges and universities provide student interns to teach after-school programs, providing both the student interns and the center participants a great learning opportunity.
- Hospitals and community health centers develop programs and activities to work with centers on public education, and improve the community's health.

Communities

Communities win, too. Just a few benefits:

- The foundation of a sound local economy is rooted in the financial resources of the people who live there. When residents prosper, so does the community where they live.

- Neighborhood Networks center foster partnerships of local groups and businesses working together toward common goals - partnerships that can strengthen a community's very fabric.

Need tools? Need information?

Neighborhood Networks offers resources for anyone running or working with a Neighborhood Networks center.

- The Neighborhood Networks Information Center (1-888-312-2743) is available to provide information and answer questions. Call to order any of the Neighborhood Networks publications — guides, fact sheets and newsletters covering every aspect of center operation and management.
- The Neighborhood Networks Web site (www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org) provides a full range of news and information, contacts and ideas. The Neighborhood Networks publications are available here, too.

Convinced? Here's how you can learn more.

✉ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Neighborhood Networks
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Fairfax, VA 22031-1207

Website www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org

E-mail mail@neighborhoodnetworks.org

☎ Neighborhood Networks Information Center
(888) 312-2743

TTY: (703) 934-3230

*"By equipping people with the skills to participate in the information revolution,
Neighborhood Networks is preparing them to take a more active role in our society."*

HUD Secretary • Andrew Cuomo



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